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The Ven. Archdeacon Pollock, M.A.
Rev. Canon Parr, M.A., Preston.
Rev. T. A. Stowell, M.A.
Rev. Js. Nugent, Roman Catholic Chaplain of the Liverpool Gaol.
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Rev. John Jones, Kirkdale.
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Sir Thomas Bazley, Bart., M.P.
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EDUCATIONAL CONGRESS,

LARGE ROOM, TOWN HALL, MANCHESTER,
WEDNESDAY & THURSDAY, 3rd and 4th November, 1869.

PROGRAMME.

WEDNESDAY, 10 to 1 a.m.

PRESIDENT:
The Right Hon. the Earl of HARROWBY, K.G.
Letters received.
Inaugural Address by the Chairman.
Report and Appointment of Executive and Officers.

PAPERS.

1. Lord ROBT. MONTAGU, M.P. (late Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education).—"What is Education? Comparison between Secular and Denominational Education." (Thirty minutes).
2. Rev. Dr. BARRY, Principal of King's College—"Religious Liberty in Education."
3. W. ROMAINE CALLENDER, jun. J.P., D.L., Manchester.—"Results of present System."
4. Rev. W. J. KENNEDY, M.A., H.M. Inspector of Schools.—"A plea for Denominational Education."

SPEAKERS.
Lord EDWARD HOWARD (Twenty minutes)
Rev. F. MEYRICK, M.A., late H.M. Inspector of Schools.
T. W. ALLIES, Esq., Sec. R.C. Poor School Committee.
Rev. J. P. PITCAIRN, M.A., Vicar of Eccles.

WEDNESDAY, 2 to 5 p.m.

PRESIDENT—HUGH BIRLEY, Esq., M.P.
Address.

PAPERS:

1. Rev. J. P. NORRIS, M.A., Canon of Bristol, formerly one of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools. "The Conscience Clause."
2. Very Rev. L. Canon TOOLE (R.C.), St. Wilfrid's, Hulme.—"On the Conscience Clause."
3. The Venerable J. ALLEN, M.A., Archdeacon of Salop.—"Denominational Education regulated by a just Conscience Clause."
4. Rev. C. SEWELL, M.A., late Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools.—"On exact limits of necessary Reform in Education."

SPEAKERS:
CHARLES BUXTON, Esq., M.P. (Twenty minutes.)
Right Rev. Bishop RYAN.
The Bishop of COLOMBO.
The Very Rev. the Dean of DURHAM.
Rev. Canon MELVILLE, M.A.

THURSDAY, 10 to 1 a.m.

PRESIDENT:
The Hon. ALGERNON F. EGERTON, M.P.
Address.

PAPERS:

1. Colonel AKROYD, M.P.—"Practical Results of the Factory System of Education, and its extension as a basis of National Education."
2. ALEXANDER REDGRAVE, Whitewall, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Factories.—"Extension of Half Time System."
3. Rev. Dr. RIGG, Principal of the Wesleyan Training College, Westminster.—"On Compulsory Education."
4. Rev. W. K. MORRISON, M.A., Vicar of St. James's, Halifax.—"The weak points in the working of our present System considered."

SPEAKERS:
The Right Hon. W. F. COWPER, M.P. (twenty minutes).
Rev. Dr. BELL, Vicar of Goole.
Rev. Canon NORRIS, M.A.

THURSDAY—2 to 5 p.m.

PRESIDENT—The Right Hon. W. F. COWPER, M.P.
Address.

PAPERS.

1. Rev. J. BARDSLEY, M.A., Rector of St. Ann's, Manchester.—"Recent Mis-statements on the Question."
2. J. FLINT, Esq., Registrar of the Duke of Newcastle's Commission on Education.—"Arguments against local rating for the Education of the Poor."
3. Rev. T. S. DALE, M.A., Vicar of St. Luke's, Birmingham, Hon. Sec. Association for the Extension and Amendment of the present system of National Education. "Popular fallacies with regard to recent proposals."
4. R. J. GAINSFORD, Esq., Sheffield.—"Experience of Foreign Countries, as to Secular, Mixed, and Denominational Education."

SPEAKERS:
Rev. Canon SMITH, M.A., Kent.
Concluding Address.

GENERAL REMARKS.

1. Readers of Papers are allowed twenty minutes: but it is desirable not to exceed fifteen minutes; Speakers fifteen minutes, but it is desirable not to exceed ten. The Chairman's bell will ring three minutes before the time for concluding.

2. Gentlemen whose names do not appear in the Programme, desirous to speak, will please send card and address to the Secretary, either before or during the Congress.

3. Readers and Speakers will please assemble in the Mayor's Parlour, ten minutes before each session.

4. All Readers and Speakers must keep within the basis laid down in the scheme of the Union. The Reception Committee have made such arrangements as were in their power for the extension of hospitality to members of Congress from a distance.

5. The authorised report of the proceedings of the Congress will be published as soon after the close as possible. Price 2s. to non-members of the Union. For copies send name, address, and number wanted to Rev. W. STANYER, M.A., Manchester, N.

6. Members of Congress may have their letters addressed to the Town Hall, Manchester. Enquire of the keeper.

7. A more complete list of Speakers will be issued on the eve of the Congress.

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[LIVING MEN OF LETTERS.]

II.—MR. ANTHONY TROLLOPE.

[A few words introductory to our proposed series of papers on LIVING MEN OF LETTERS should have preceded the article on Mr. Tennyson last week, but they were accidentally omitted. So we supply them now, before beginning our second sketch.

M. HENRI TAINE, in his *Contemporary Writers*, passes a little pleasant French "chaff," very light to bear and easy to understand, upon us English Philistines. We care not, he says, for a man when he is living, look you, but after he is dead, why then we get some starched graduate, or some dry-as-dust lawyer, to write a biography in three volumes, a biography which nobody reads, which is dull, stupid and inane, and which is put into the hands of some young Edinburgh or Quarterly Reviewer, to stew down into a few readable pages for the public, and then forgotten. How true all this is! But is it not more true that this custom arises no less from the stupidity of friends than from the delicacy of the nation? We don't want spies and key-hole reporters about our great men. We do not intend to say a word about those whom we are about to criticize which a gentleman can *not* say. Our purpose is to photograph, to sketch, to criticize, and to give hard knocks when they are wanted, but nothing farther. That we should know what manner of man he is of whom we read, well and good; that we should know more is not so good. We do not want any prying over hedges, but we do want sound answers to weak lines, honest withstanding of vicious insinuations, and bold rebukings of that paltry, intense, cockneyfied Egoism which pervades all literature, which has arisen in our authors, because the Court has for years scorned and neglected Literature, given it no honour and no recognition, and has left it, with its microscopic eye, to prey upon itself.

Women rival men in Literature; they were included among *Men of the Time*, and they will not be absent from these columns. In short, in giving critical biographies of the best known of our living authors, we propose to do for England what the excellent series of *brochures, Les Contemporains*, does for France.]

WE protest that in the sketch of Tennyson we have not been unjust. We love him as well as most young ladies; perhaps we understand him better. But it is a sign of a weak age when living men of letters are puffed up with a flatulent laudation, and are exalted above the illustrious dead. Any one who knows English literature will remember the time when Alexander Pope was elevated above that poor creature Shakespere, who was looked upon as a wildly luxuriant clownish genius who wanted improving—as he has been improved by Tate and Cibber. There still was a galaxy of poets all revolving round one central star, Garth, Tickle, Spratt, King, Eusden, Sheffield! How dreary read those names now, and yet each man had—egad, each man has merit. They were very pretty fellows, but flattery in their day slew them. Before you condemn them wholly read them. They were not entirely without some good; but in their days their flatterers made them gods. Now Tennyson is just as far from Shakespere as ever Tickle, or Garth, or Eusden is from him, and Mr. Anthony Trollope is about as far from Fielding.

And yet we like Trollope much. He writes "as a gentleman for gentlemen," as the horrid cads of the day have it, as if Homer, the led-blind man as they called the nameless one, wrote only for one class. But in this picked age you see we label our works of genius. Every stupid shilling's worth, *testibus Belgravia* or *London Society*—you could not go further from good literature, nor fare worse on the whole—describes itself as a "first-class" magazine. That is why such are purchased only by third-class passengers, and those flunkeys and housemaids who shoulder us poor Bohemians in the second-class. Every paper is a first-class organ, and essentially in this meaning Mr. Anthony Trollope is a first-class novelist, and yet he is very clever and has had an effect on this age. "Sir," says a character in Jerrold's *Housekeeper*, "I am a student of human nature. "Yes," retorts his interlocutor, "you study human nature as a housebreaker does a house, *to take advantage of its weakest parts*." Trollope has done this with our parsons. Of him we may say that he

To parsons gave up what was meant for mankind.

For from the bishop and his wife in *Barchester Towers* to that good old fellow the Rev. Mr. Crawley, who puts the noble ballad of Lord Bateman into Greek verse, preserving the measure and the rhyme, Trollope is never tired of introducing us inside the clerical waistcoat. Do we think anything better of the parsons? We know parsons well, and, upon the whole, though we find them men like ourselves, sometimes not too elevated, not too self-sacrificial, not too noble, we can only think that the clerics drawn by Trollope are a disgrace—and almost a libel. We do not say that they are not true. They are photographically true, but they are never so from the highest and noblest sight-point. Vandyke, whose portraits are true to nature, and Lawrence in a lower way, never painted anything but a gentleman or a lady. So some few of our photographers elevate their photographic sitters. They take them at their best. They look clever, well, at ease, capable. Other artists stand on a lower ground, and give us those sombre, hard-featured, commonplace English men and women who make our photographic albums a horror, and the portraits of our actresses in the shop windows a sin and a disgrace. Mr. Trollope hath dealt somewhat after this fashion with our clergy. He has not done any better with our dukes and men in office; he has not flattered our pretty, commonplace English girls, and as for our equally commonplace young Englishmen, let Johnny Eames bear witness that he pictured them as very ordinary Philiolmes and fools. And yet we all read him and like him. What is the power he has over us? Simply there is but one answer. It is art—very low, commonplace art—but it is art. Mr. Trollope is a literary workman of a sort; but a true workman.

His outward appearance symbolizes, or rather pictures, his inner. When you look at his face, you exclaim, with Addison's Cato, "Plato, thou arguest well." For, as that great one said, the soul chooses a fit house wherein to dwell, you must own that the soul of Trollope has fitted itself with a proper and suggestive tabernacle. He is gaunt, grim, partly grey, and looks taller than he is; his eyes are noticeable, dark, and brilliant; two strong lines down each side of his mouth, lost in a tufted American-like beard, give him a look of greater ill-nature than he possesses. He is unquestionably a gentleman, but of the middle-class look, by no means of the *haut école*. He gives one an idea—that is, if one knows life and town pretty well—that he has seen hard service in the drudgery of some government office; he has a cut and dried official look, and seems capable of scolding and otherwise irritating his juniors. He looks his age—about fifty-five—and is a man one would hardly choose to confide in. A Winchester and afterwards a Harrow boy, he gave little promise of inheriting any of the brilliant caustic genius of his mother, whose most truthful pictures of the United States made the Americans hate her; while her immortal figure of the widow Barnaby caused her sex never to forgive her. His inherited genius is of a different kind, less incisive, much less vulgar, as people have it, but, as we think, far inferior. The sons of great ones generally show this. There are living men of letters who inherit the *nomen et preterea nihil* else of the father, and who yet pick up a decent living on their intangible estate. Neither Anthony nor his brother Thomas Adolphus, who is five years his senior, owe anything to their mother's style or manner. Both are educated gentlemen, who have been too much and too well taught to be copyists. They both write well; in his way the historian, T. A. Trollope, perhaps the better of the two, but we repeat, there is not even a *soupcon* of the old flavour of Mrs. Fanny Trollope.

Anthony has been a most industrious writer. He never made a big hit or a sensation, but he has hit the public continually in the same place, and has succeeded in making an impression. From *Barchester Towers*, *The Bertrams*, *Castle Richmond*, by far his wittiest story, to *The Small House at Allington*, *Rachel Ray*, *Can You Forgive Her?* *Phineas Finn*, and this *Vicar of Bullhampton*, which was originally bought for *Once a Week*, and now walks alone on his own hook, there are many novels, but only two distinct grounds, Irish and clerical. The "clothes which" Trollope "occupies" are chiefly clerical, a very shabby clerical suit; and it is hard to say whether his bishops or his bishops' wives are most distasteful. We don't like either. What students in the lower life think of their pastors and masters in the higher life, so repeated and photographed by Trollope, we forbear to say. They must regard them with infinite disgust. Selfish, very meanly small and narrow, without strength enough to be positively hateful, they amuse us, flatter our vanity skilfully by showing us how much better we are than they; and then they are forgotten. There are not many notes in their music; bloodless, passionless, highly genteel, they are content to live and to be fed——and their talk is like them.

These true pictures of an age very poor and weak in its nature, very

mu h subdued, sceptical, lymphatic, and with an eternal need of "prodding" and "goading" to make it stir—of an age which could believe in Lord Palmerston as a God-guided minister, have found an excellent illustrator in a man who has great merit, but which the age persists in accepting as an illustrative artist—you might as well call him a balloonist—John Everett Millais. He is as well fitted to Trollope as Phiz is to Dickens When Phiz tried to illustrate our author, as he did in *Can You Forgive Her?*, he failed miserably; he absolutely put life and humour into some of the figures under which Trollope had written such subscriptions as these—dry, empty as old nuts, but singularly descriptive of the author and his mind. Here are the titles, taken haphazard: "And you went at him at the station?" (two backs of young men, a shawl and a bonnet in the distance—*Millais).* "Won't you take some more wine?" (old fogies drinking—*Millais).* "Would you mind shutting the window?" (young doll and withered old doll in petticoats—*Phiz).* "Bell, here's the inkstand" (female model on a ladder, back view; side view of a ditto holding ladder—*Millais).* We will not go on. When you look at these, you will think that the author and artist have conferred a sweet boon upon you, but your blood will not run more rapidly, nor your heart bound with nobler expansion. At least ours don't. Some of our modern wooden artists, *eleves* of the great manufactory of Dalziel Bros., *raffollent* about these cuts. "Look," they will say, "at the folds of that gown, sir! Ah, Jove! what a coat sleeve!" Well, but what about the figure inside?

> I've seen much finer women, ripe and real,
> Than all the nonsense of their stone ideal,

said Byron. Of course he had not, but that's neither here nor there. One could not well surpass the Venus, Hercules, or Apollo in flesh and blood; but if you were to put Millais's gowns and coats into Regent Street, one could match them.

The same may be said of the author's personages. They are made to pattern, and to supply a demand. The public wants a common-place English girl and it gets Lucy Roberts or Lily Dale. The tone is low, quiet; the study solid, repeatedly painted, and round; the ideas, the manners, the very words of the day are reproduced. Will they live? No; not twenty years! Live! Why should they? Who would care to load his shelves with paper and print containing such words as these: "Mamma, dear, give me a postage stamp." "Here is one, Lily. Are you going to the Post?" "No, I think Old John Boston will come this way. He may as well take it." "So he may," said Mrs. Dale thoughtfully——" And so on for pages. But it is so real! Now is not the postage stamp real? Yes, as real as his women, Lady Glencora Palliser, Mrs. Proudie, Mrs. Crawley, Mrs. Gazebee, and the rest; as real as the men, Mr. Plantagenet Palliser, the Duke of Omnium, Mr. Fothergill, Johnny Eames—we need not particularize. Some of his vulgar sketches are very clever—Mr. Scruby and the man who travels with iron furniture, Captain Bellfield and Mr. Chesacre. They are British Philistines proper, and have not an ounce of nobility among the lot, and what Mr. Trollope does not find he certainly does not put in. His stories are drawn from such a realistic standpoint that the effect of reading his books is as deadening as a photographer's glass door-case full of ordinary men and women. Have these people souls? Do they possess hearts and brains? Should we be proud of belonging to such a race? They are the true pictures of the age; can we rejoice in the times we live in? They have not goodness enough in them to be saved. Heaven, unless a heaven of gigs, nice clothes, and five hundred a year, would be utterly superfluous, they are so much lower than the angels; neither have they force or strength enough to be damned. An utterly relentless annihilation is all that we can demand for them; practically we give them that; we read on and on and forget.

Is it worth while being a novelist, however clever, to produce so little? Are clergymen really but walking respectabilities in white chokers? Are our mothers and sisters such quiet shadowless dummies? Have we no hopes and fears, no tears, laughter, rejoicings; no death, no future hopes beyond this earth, no heroic feelings which lift us beyond this earth's sphere? Thank God, good people, whose goodness is confined to the fact that they do not swear, commonplace bishops and vinegary bishops' wives, squires and their educated do-nothing sons, girls who feebly intrigue as they play croquet for a good match, and are utterly regardless of good men, are passing away. We must have a nobler outcome. If Mr. Trollope paints—and he paints firmly, consistently, and with a quiet obstinate kind of art—all that can be found in English Society, the sooner that society is changed for something of a more decided pattern the better. No one can care for the faint and obscure outlines and the colourless sort of wool with which Mr. Trollope weaves his human carpets.

A NIGHT AMONG THIEVES.

OUR rendezvous and starting point was the South Parade, near St. Mary's Church; our destination Charter Street, Angel Meadow, and the vicinity. Our conductors were detectives. Beyond this we are at liberty to say nothing. Their number, names, and appearance; the precise nature of our business; how much of it, in fact, was business, and how much mere curiosity; the titles and localities of the beershops, lodging houses, and receptacles for stolen goods which we visited; the names of the proprietors and frequenters of the above places—we must withhold for more reasons than one. Suffice it that we could have not have had a better escort. "Don't look too respectable" was the hint given us beforehand. Well, we didn't. No more did our companions. For a whole night we walked, lounged, went in and out, up and down, backwards and forwards, among thieves, and none else but thieves. We brushed elbows with gentlemen and ladies whose life alternates between Charter Street and the City Gaol. The very air—and foul and noisome it was, as a general rule—had a thievish *feel* about it. We were confused no less than shocked by what we saw, but our recollection is sufficiently distinct, and our pen sufficiently at liberty, for a paper like the present—a paper which has a far deeper object, be it said, than that of merely gratifying idle curiosity.

To judge from the accounts given us by the detectives with whom we walked towards Charter Street, and while so walking, the power of the police has wofully decreased of late. The recent Act whereby the magistrates have withdrawn the licences from so many disorderly beershops and taverns, has fallen like a thunderbolt upon the thieves' quarter in our city. The most noted meeting houses for skilled cracksmen and pickpockets have been closed and deserted, as in an instant. "Bad thing for us, though," said the detective by our side. "When we wanted a man, we used to know pretty nearly where to find him; but since the Act, they're scattered in all directions. Some have gone into lodgings, about Strangeways, for instance, and other parts, and it will be well nigh impossible to track them. Others have taken to wandering about from town to town. In fact, we shall mostly have wandering thieves now all over the country." Was this a change for the worse, did he think? "Why, yes. You see, they come down in a gang, work a lot of mischief, and are off again before we have fairly laid eyes on them. We have now, in Manchester, London hands, Bristol hands, Sheffield hands, thieves from all parts, whom we don't rightly know, and shan't till they're gone again." Altogether, our friend was quite down in the mouth about the consequences of the Act, as regarded his warren. At any rate, we pointed out, it was a capital thing that so many notoriously bad houses should be shut up. Well, he didn't exactly know. "There are just as many bad customers left. The only difference is that we knew where to find them before, and now we don't." To him this difference was all in all, and he could look no further.

While this conversation has been going on, we have reached the bottom end of Corporation Street, and, suddenly, for our recollection waxes hazy at this point, find ourselves in the midst of narrow dirty back slums, which make us involuntarily feel our empty pockets, and rejoice over their emptiness. Empty enough the whole party of us are, save and except for an odd shilling or two, and sundry pipes and cigars, highly necessary in the rooms and among the odours at hand.

"Two of the most noted fences in the North of England," whispers one of the detectives, as we draw near a little shop at the corner of a somewhat dirtier street than we have yet come to. The two gentlemen in question are chatting together in the doorway. Their reputation is founded on the skilful manner in which, for many years, they have received stolen goods, making no enquiries, we presume for conscience sake, and still fewer objections, and disposing of the said goods afterwards so as to cause no trouble to any one, except the original owners and the baffled agents of the law. These two gentlemen seem on the best of terms with our guides, and exchange salutations with them with

the utmost ease, and, we may almost say, cordiality. They have both taken rather a longish voyage at Her most gracious Majesty's expense, and really look none the worse for their journey. "Walk in, gentlemen, walk in!" says the one who owns the shop. We do walk in, crowding the shop somewhat inconveniently, and being at once invited to "stand" something by the lady of the house, a buxom, lively woman, who treats our visit in the light of a good joke, for much the same reason, probably, as we chuckled just now over our empty pockets. What we are supposed to stand, or to buy, is a puzzle, as the only commodity for sale, so far as we can see, is a large jar-full of pickled onions. We pass out and on our way, with sundry sarcastic comments on our appearance and behaviour following us into the street.

Gloom and desolation! Dirty courts, without sign of life or light! House after house apparently tenantless; some actually so. Here and there a deserted beer-shop, emptied by the Act; but once, and that not long ago, renowned for its nightly and lively company. A few miserably clad, dirty-looking objects flitting about, like the ghosts of former inhabitants, and vanishing suddenly round unexpected corners as we approach. A scene, or succession of scenes, more dreary and wretched it would be impossible to imagine. "They are most of them away just now,"—the detectives explain—"waiting for the theatres and concerts to close. We are a bit too early for them." Nevertheless, when we enter any of these seemingly deserted houses, there are plenty of thieves, big and little, old and young, male and female, to give us a sulky, grinning, obsequious, or utterly indifferent greeting, as the case may be.

A dark, narrow passage, a large kitchen at the end, with a correspondingly large fireplace. In front of the fireplace a table. On each side a form, or a number of ricketty wooden chairs. Grouped about the fire, eating their supper at the table, sometimes sleeping, sometimes huddled together, with apparently nothing to do except to receive visitors, we won't say like ourselves, but, like the detectives who are with us—men, women, and children, a community of rascality—types of ignorance, low cunning, want, and vice—young lads of the "rough" stamp so well known on race-courses and in every crowd—girls prematurely old, and with only one thing about them worse, or which could be worse, than their looks, and that is their languge, when they are allowed to speak, which, by the way, is not often. We say "allowed to speak." There is generally a dead silence, or very nearly so, after our entrance. We stand looking at the group, and the group look back, some openly and defiantly, others furtively, and with an elaborate assumption of taking no notice at all. The master or mistress of the house, or both, come forward and greet us. If any one attempts chaff or insult, he is stopped, sworn at, told to be quiet. "Don't be a fool!" "Let the gentleman alone, can't yer?" In one instance, a ferocious looking ruffian, one of the travelling thieves we presume, who had not as yet learned the faces of our conductors, came forward, with horrid imprecations, and threats as unpleasant as unparliamentary. Even in this case it was all empty sound, and ended in nothing: not, however, for want of will on the part of the speaker, but through the prompt interference of the rest. "When a row *does* break out, it is nasty," observed one of the detectives. "They use all sorts of weapons, pitch pots out of the upper windows, use feet, knives, and anything which comes handy." During the whole night, however, we met with nothing worse than the curses of the above-mentioned ruffian; and generally with silence and indifference, the latter admirably feigned if not real.

One large corner lodging house we explored from basement to attic. The landlord, an obsequiously-polite Irishman, led the way with a light, and we followed up the steep narrow stairs, into a room with three beds, each tenanted; then into another with four beds and four sleepers; then up another flight of stairs into two or three more rooms; then up again and in and out, from room to room, and storey to storey, until we grew utterly confounded, and could no more have found our way out than we could or would have found it in, without the guidance and guardianship of the detectives. Beds everywhere, even in a sort of passage under a staircase; passages, and doors, and staircases in all directions; no chairs or other furniture but the beds themselves, and no bed empty. Every face looked at, carefully examined in some instances, by one of our guides. The clothes drawn back, and sleeper's head turned round towards the light, when necessary. No remonstrance, scarcely a word from any of these suddenly-aroused sleepers. No apparent surprise at our abrupt entrance. Never was such a rude shock to our ancient notion that an Englishman's house, and especially his bed room, is his castle. How should we like, some night, to be invaded by a succession of rough-looking customers, smoking, treading without ceremony about our bed room, drawing back the clothes, gazing intently at our face, perhaps asking us who we were, and where we came from last, and then stalking out without further word or apology? And this is what we assisted to do this night; and this is what has to be continually done, in order that the guardians of the good city of Manchester may know the names, faces, and whereabouts of dangerous visitors.

In Charter Street itself we must have visited some fifteen or twenty houses, going, in some cases, upstairs; content, in others, with an inspection of the lower rooms and kitchen. As the night wore on, and the various gangs began to come in, from Peter Street and the other places where they

Their *nightly* course of duty run,

the kitchen scenes grew much more animated. In one house there must have been nearly forty thieves collected, busy smoking, eating, drinking, chatting, in two large rooms; while fresh arrivals kept constantly entering. We think it was here, though our memory is so confused that we cannot speak with any certainty, that we found upstairs, in the otherwise empty bed rooms, a poor wretched object, with head bandaged up, and labouring from a seeming combination of asthma, bronchitis, consumption, and a dozen messengers of death. Surely, a pitiable spectacle, in a Christian country, within the sound of Sabbath bells—an English heathen in want of missionary far more than Zulu or Hottentot—dying as he has lived, without God or good. There! Come away, and down stairs again!

And now, down a little narrow blind alley, holding on by the coat tails of the man in front of us, for it is pitch dark, and we can see not even the coat which we are grasping; and so into a gloomy cavern of a yard at the back of these Charter Street lodging houses—and, good gracious! with more doors opening into this *cul de sac*, another row of even dirtier and smaller dens again. Our guide turns to the left, and ushers us, through another dark passage, into a cheerful kitchen, where are sitting two or three men of a better stamp than most of those we have already seen. It may be that we have entered, so to speak, by the back door, and that there is another and more public entrance, but we see none. We are in the presence of thieves worth looking at; men who fly at higher game than mere handkerchief snatchers and lurry-lifters. One of them even pretends to recognize one of our companions, and reminds him of a "little job" they did together at Sheffield, to the great amusement of the whole room. "Ah!" said our guide, with a sigh, "You should have seen what I could have shown you before the Act: twenty or thirty first-class thieves sitting together, well-dressed, and sporting their diamond rings." The subject was evidently a painful one.

The greatest swell in the thief line—the only one to whom the word "swell" could properly be applied—lay, turning the red morocco tips of his slippers towards the ceiling, in the bar-room of a little public-house which we entered almost at the commencement of our ramble. It was a comfortable-looking room, hung round with sporting prints, and our be-slippered friend lay calmly surveying us with an air which implied that it was condescension on his part to do so. He was not more than thirty, we should say; well-dressed—not flashily or expensively, but really well-dressed—and looked *almost* a gentleman. We were told to remark him carefully, and we did. He would appear to be a sort of king in these realms of lawlessness, an Agamemnon among his fellows.

Emerging from the dark alley into Charter Street again, we witness a little bit of a row; nothing much for Charter Street, but still a relief after the monotonous silence which has reigned in the street ever since we first entered it—a silence broken only by the gangs as they returned home, and by the songs and shoutings of an occasional drunken man. The row breaks out in a house to our left. We enter without ceremony, as usual. A drunken, ragged being is scuffling with some women for the possession of—what we cannot see, but we suppose money. He is on the floor, raving, cursing, shouting, and struggling all at once. A few spectators like ourselves gather idly round the door, amongst them two policemen—they walk about by twos in this district, do these calm, stolid guardians of the peace. A moment more, and the unhappy wretch is cast forth by one of the women, pushed out into the midst of us as if he were a child, and left to curse and rage as he likes

—a clear case of ejection. There is a lively scene for some five minutes, a scene of which the detectives, the policemen, and we visitors, are passive spectators until the row threatened to spread, and one or two passers-by, the reverse of respectable, began to join in. Then the police interfered, and the ragged outcast—the outcast even from Charter Street—slunk away to some hiding-place less select, and was no more seen.

The night wore on. It was bitterly cold, and the sights and scenes around us were cheerless and more cheerless still. From one house to another, and one group to another, it was the same old story of wretchedness, crime, and degradation. It was striking the hour of midnight as we came away from this part of our civilized Christian city, which so fearfully belies both civilization and Christianity. Our visit had made us suspicious of all men and all things. Every man we met seemed a thief; every woman——well, no matter! We have not told all we saw. We cannot. Would that those Christian professors who are jangling and wrangling with one another, as to the particular phase of Christianity, the peculiar shibboleth, the precise creed and doctrine they are to teach their fellow-sinners—would but look on the scenes we witnessed this night, and join hands together against the Devil and his doings, so close to them! We have suffered too much from sermons, to sermonize; but, fresh from the sermon preached to us by Charter Street, we lift up our voice against the straw splitting of the religious world, against the Christianity which theorizes and argues while men and women sin and die, for want of a common effort against a common foe.

BILLIARDS.

COOK *v.* ROBERTS, JUNIOR, AT MOSS SIDE.

UNTIL last Tuesday evening we laboured under the delusion that we could play billiards. For fifteen or twenty years we had chalked our cue and paid our sixpences with a regularity worthy, some say, of a better cause. Place the strides we have taken round a table out in a straight line, and they would reach hundreds, nay, thousands of miles. We have read books by the conventional midnight lamp till we have dreamt that our head was performing astounding cannons against other heads of much harder and more suitable material. We have practised spot strokes until we felt that no polite word could adequately express our disgust at the repeated failures, attributable to the irregular shape of the balls, and the imperfect formation of the cue. We have studied angles till the habit of picturing them on every rectangular surface became chronic. We have fumbled away at impossible five shots, and strained our very hearts at losing hazards for hours together, and still, after doing and enduring all this, we are compelled to admit that we can't play. In an unsuspecting moment we went to the Prince of Wales Assembly Rooms, Moss Side, on Tuesday last, and there our dream of excellence was rudely dashed aside by Messrs. Cook and Roberts.

Let us go through that evening again. We enter a large room, lofty and well suited for the purpose for which it has been prepared. In the centre there stands a new billiard table, with its green unstained cloth, and carefully polished framework, looking very inviting, but the invitation is not for us. There is a clear space around it for the players, then several rows of reserved seats and front benches, and behind them the shilling places. The room is filled with men and smoke. There is the usual subdued uproar of many voices, and the usual trampling sound of many feet. We take our place and look around. Through the haze we see numbers of faces we know, and numbers of faces we should not care to know; markers and their patrons exchanging weighty opinions on the business before us; grave men trying to look gay, and gay men trying to look grave; young hands stroke young chins very thoughtfully just now, for it is doubtful which is the best investment for that half crown which refuses to rest in the pocket. There are shrewd men quietly waiting for their chance, yet apparently wholly absorbed in abstruse calculations as to the time that fly will take to reach the top of the table. Jolly looking men whose faces are stained with purer air than is to be found here. Pale, delicate youths who know little of the game beyond the rudimentary experience of splitting a cloth; sporting men with very comfortable clothing and whiskerless face, and that inevitable man yonder, with his hat on one side, that turns up everywhere.

Everyone is talking of the game of the previous night in which Cook made a splendid break, and of the respective merits of the two players "I like Cook," says a gentleman near us. "He is a quiet, steady, fellow that always plays to win, and doesn't spend his money like a fool. He can be backed for £50 of my money any day." "How does he play with the elder Roberts?" inquires anorher gentleman sitting next him. "Why he can beat him, sir. Cook is the finest player that England ever produced." "Gammon," grunts one of the champion's admirers, who has overheard the decided expression of opinion and can't listen to such image breaking any longer. "He's nowt o't' sort." And so there are two parties—those who believe Cook has no equal, and those who think he has.

Here are the players. They are received with a little applause. Every eye is centred on them, and the company settle down into their respective places, anxiously watching the movements of the pair. Cook quietly takes off his coat, and enters the arena. Placing his cue case on the table, he unlocks it, and takes out two beautifully shaped cues, from which, after a careful examination of the tips, he selects the magic wand that is to do such matchless things. Roberts follows. He is taller than his opponent, and has dark hair and whiskers, with something of his father's expression on his face. Cook is very fair, has light hair and whiskers, is of a slight build, and has a delicate, earnest look that prepossesses us in his favour. Taking off his rings, and putting them in his pocket, he makes a bad trial shot or two while his opponent is preparing. At last all is ready; the red is spotted, and at twenty minutes to eight the game is commenced. The first miss in baulk is given amid profound silence. This is followed by another miss, and then scoring begins. At first the play is anything but good, and there is not a man in the room who does not think he could do as well. Cook plays somewhat nervously, and is evidently annoyed at the "Oh, oh's" that follow his failures. Like a young racehorse on his first entrance to a crowded course, he seems a little fretted and fidgetted by the noise of so many voices, but when the race is really begun he is alone, and appears to hear nothing but the ivory kisses of the balls as they meet on the new green cloth. Roberts seems to play with more nerve at the outset, and makes some clever strokes. His pushing strokes, and trickling cannons in which he preserved the triangle for many successive scores, are very well executed, and his play for position is also good. Before a quarter of the game is over he leads by one hundred and sixty points. It is too early in the game for much betting; soon it will be too late. We do not hear a single offer to stake money on the result, although at this point Roberts's chance looks rosy. The spectators appear to be absorbed too much in the play to speak, and have evidently not quite arrived at any conclusion as to which cue will play the last shot.

But now Roberts' luck and Cook's play undergo a very marked change. Roberts is passed, and Cook leads. Good breaks follow each other rapidly, and there is more frequent applause. Now comes the unsurpassed scoring of Cook. A hundred and twelve consecutive spot strokes, and a total break of three hundred and fifty-nine. The announcement is received with tremendous applause, which is continued for some time. Cook nods his acknowledgment, and rests upon his cue. He must feel at this moment as he has never felt before. In one game he has accomplished more than any man has ever done before him. He has exceeded the largest score the elder Roberts ever made, and has snatched the laurels from him on his own ground, performing the champion's famous spot stroke more often consecutively than the champion himself. He has "touched the highest point of all his glory," and his marvellous play to-night will be spoken of wherever the game on the green cloth is known; and those who saw him climb this pinnacle will look back to it as one of the most brilliant and extraordinary performances either they or other men have seen. Another small break from Roberts, and Cook's cue strikes the balls the last stroke in the game, winning by six hundred and forty-one points.

There is a final shout of applause, and everyone rises from his seat to crowd round the players, and the table on which they played. The pockets are pronounced easy, and the cushions appear to slope off more towards the opening than in other tables, yet the difference is very trifling. The players resume their coats, and chat with their friends, while the spectators make a rush on the bar in the corner. We quietly light a final cigar, and walk homeward through the cold, frosty night, leaving our conceit behind us.

Cook plays very steadily and very gracefully. He settles down into a strong position with his feet wide apart and his playing arm at full liberty. His stroke is a nervous *feeling* stroke. His play is quick, but his accuracy wonderful. To score a thousand in a match, with such an opponent, in less than one hour and three quarters is a marvellous performance. He plays like a man whose nerves are finely strung, but know no faltering when he is once absorbed in the game. Leading, as we believe he does, a steady life, he has an immense advantage over his opponents, who are not, as a rule, abstemious men, and do not betray any marked preference for teetotal drinks. We believe that luck against luck and form against form, there is no man living that can give him points.

Roberts is also a quick player and a graceful one too. His long reach will enable him to play more without the rest than the majority of his opponents. He has a quick eye, and handles his cue, with either hands, to perfection. It struck us, from what we saw, that he is not good at an up-hill game. Directly Cook headed him he fell off and never once rallied. It is true he contended against very bad luck, and everything went against him; yet there were many chances he had of redeeming his position if he had played a more plucky game. He gave misses when he could have scored to advantage with a cannon game.

We agree with those who think that the spot stroke is the ruin of billiards. During the whole of this game both players thought of nothing else, and every cannon or losing hazard they made was made with the object of leading into position for another run of threes off the spot.

TOWN TALK,

AND THINGS IN GENERAL.

PIT *v* STALLS AT THE THEATRE ROYAL.

ANOTHER encroachment on the privileges and comfort of the playgoers who frequent the pit, is announced as having been made at the Theatre Royal. The chairs, we are told, "that were formerly in the dress circle have been removed to the stalls, whose area has been slightly increased. There will henceforth be 160 stalls in the place of 100 before the alterations." A statement which would lead one to suppose that the "slight increase" must be a considerable one proportionately. We do not call attention to the fact with any expectation of influencing the management or bringing about a change. As everybody knows by this time, the proprietor, like the old Duke of Newcastle, is too obstinately rooted in the opinion that a man may do what he likes with his own, to be able to comprehend his own interests or to care for those of the public. We mention the circumstance simply in order that pittites may know what they have to expect. They form by far the most regular section of the playgoing public; they used to form the most numerous section when the opportunity was afforded them; yet of late years they have certainly been treated with scant courtesy. This latest curtailment of their domain at the Theatre Royal will, of course, make their position still more uncomfortable, and place them at a greater disadvantage than ever. It must add to their annoyance to remember that, for nine months out of the twelve, the stalls are almost entirely unoccupied, and that the space of which they have been dispossessed—deserted, useless, and an eyesore—is tantalizingly before them always.

THE LATE MR. THOMAS JONES, Q.C..

One by one the older members of the Northern Circuit keep dropping off, thinning away to make place for the innumerable younger ones who crowd it and speedily make any vacant gaps invisible. The latest death is that of Mr. Thomas Jones, who was not so very long ago promoted to the inner bar, and was perhaps not quite so well known to the public as to the profession. Those of our readers who have heard of him will probably recognise him more readily by the name of Fielding's hero—"Tom Jones"—a diminutive into which the learned gentleman's name was invariably contracted. Those of our readers who have seen him will probably have noticed him in court with his wig either pushed back over a deep round forehead, or pulled down over a snub nose and a pair of merry twinkling eyes; or they may have seen him strolling through the town on a dirty wet day, or placidly puffing a midnight cigar on the Bury New road, in the costume in which his heart delighted—a brown horse-rug, flung carelessly over his shoulders. Mr. Jones's imperturbable good humour and jocular assurance made him very well known in the courts and a privileged person with the judges. Many anecdotes are told of him, but none more characteristic of the man, and exemplary of the lengths to which he was allowed to go, than his famous observation to the usher when a certain judge differed with him on a point of law: "Usher, bring his lordship *Blackstone*, or some other elementary work." And now he is dead.

THALIA IN COURT.

In consequence of the protracted illness of poor, overworked Mr Boucicault, the Princess's Theatre, London, has been compelled to close its doors. An action will probably be brought against the invalid for non-delivery of his promised play. Admirers of *Formosa* will be disappointed to hear of this accident to the second young lady—of the name of *Jezebel*—who was to have been now driving merrily along the newly opened "thoroughfare." It is also rumoured that Mr. H. J. Byron is about to bring an action against Mr. Sothern for refusing to perform a character in a comedy of Mr. Byron's, which it had been stipulated he should play.

THE NEW CHURCH AT SWINTON.

Perhaps no living architect has so laboriously devoted himself to the study of foreign ecclesiastical architecture as Mr. G. E. Street, A.R.A., and yet all his works are preeminently distinguished by the thoroughness of their English character. The new church of St. Peter the Apostle, at Swinton, is an illustration, and a noble illustration too, of Mr. Street's great powers as a Gothic artist. We might almost say that as a type of a village church it is faultless. It is capacious, being able to seat some ten hundred persons; it is solid, and yet light; the workmanship is honest; and, a rare quality in these days, its acoustic properties are admirable. The style is middle-pointed, of the palmiest days, and the church is of stone throughout. The exterior stonework is "rock-faced," and, though even Mr. Street has now sanctioned the use of stone dressed in this manner, we must contend that it destroys the true feeling of every Gothic building in which it is used. "Rusticity" is the very negative of Gothic. Internally the walls are of dressed ashlar. The pulpit and the reredos are not worthy either of Mr. Street or of his church. The former lacks depth in the ornamental details, and the latter is simply stiff and ugly. There is no clerestory, and the real length of the church, 130 feet, becomes apparently greater. The width is 63 feet, and the extreme height 52 feet. Altogether, we hope Mr. Street's work, here and at Bradford-cum-Beswick, may be regarded as an omen of the doom of "carpenter's Gothic," which has so long reigned in Manchester. Even to the glazing of the windows, the church is a study.

THE CONVERSION OF THE JEWS.

MY DEAR *Sphinx*,—

I wish to take you into my confidence touching a rather important matter, and I hope you will for once lay aside that enigmatical character which you ordinarily assume, and allow a little play to your extremely stolid features and to that rather blunt nose, to which I should be disposed to think Mr. Tom King had been paying attentions, had I not recently learnt that he is now the Rev. T. King, and an awakener, which indeed he always was, especially with his left. I have been requested by public advertisement to attend a meeting for the conversion of the Jews, under the chairmanship of George Robinson, Esquire. I would gladly have gone to have heard what Mr. Robinson had to say, but I was under articles to visit the Free Trade Hall on the same evening, and to give a cheer to the Bishop-designate of Exeter, which I did with all my heart and soul and strength. In listening to Dr. Temple that evening, I was reminded that the same class of religionists who want to convert the Jews want to convert Dr. Temple, and as they are not of themselves quite strong enough for that enterprize, they desire to gain strength by illegal means. As if, when prevented

being Bishop of Exeter, Dr. Temple would be converted at once. I wondered if a Jew were converted by mild doses of Lord Shaftesbury and Dr. Pusey whether the gain to the human race would be perceptible.

I have the honour and the pleasure of knowing many Jews, and I confess I felt a little annoyed to see them classed at the Manchester Town Hall with Ojibbeways and Bosjesmen. The Jews we meet with in real life—not the Jews of the missionary platform and the annual meeting type, who are always supposed to be pegging away at the true faith of a Christian—are, taking them as a class, so liberal in principal and in purse, so well educated, such good fathers and brothers, so careful of their own poor and their own sick and disabled, that when I am asked to subscribe money to convert them, I begin to ask myself what will become of us if the Jews turn round and commence a systematized scheme for enfolding us within the ancient dispensation? I am not arguing this matter on the dogma theory. I decline to do so here or anywhere else. I can only judge of a man's religion by his life. I understand very little of doctrinal theology, or wherein consists the difference intrinsically between one denomination and another. But as they all believe themselves to be right, it is perhaps only a mark of sincerity that they should desire to convert one another. The proper plan, then, would appear to be to have a free fight of conversion all round, and not fix on the Jews alone for this reviving process. In days gone by, in the city of Norwich, two ministers of religion, the one an Unitarian, the other a Trinitarian—were announced to deliver a course of six controversial lectures each, in defence of their several ways of thinking, *and the result was that they converted one another.* This showed that they were both very accomplished men, and that they were both right and both wrong at various periods of the controversy. But you perceive that the average opinion of the universe remained undisturbed by the logic of either of the reverend controversialists. It is precisely on this principle that I should be afraid of tackling a Jew, lest peradventure he should turn round and tackle me.

Her Majesty the Queen has recently made a batch of baronets, and an excellent batch too. One of them is a Jew. Will George Robinson, Esquire, be disposed to remonstrate with his sovereign for this exercise of her prerogative because Sir David Salomons has not previously thrown in his lot with the Rev. Mr. Stern, and the Vicar of St. John's, Bootle? Why ought I to blow myself out with anxiety about the soul of Sir David Salomons, or even about that of old Mr. Melchisedec, who wants to sell me German sausages, and who brings to me for trial a piece like the section of a blue ruler, and says "Kosten sie nur einmal?" Amongst the cardinal virtues, charity is said to be the greatest, and this reminds me of another Jewish baronet, whose quality of charity and of mercy falleth like a gentle dew from heaven upon the place beneath. I should doubt very much if, amongst the sons of men, there exists at this day a nobler exemplar of the brightest of Christian virtues than Sir Moses Montefiore, who is really and truly (not figuratively) always going about doing good. We all know this, and it is not to be gainsaid. Well, now, I want to know whether it is decent to permit a grand old Jew like Sir Moses to be "nagged" at by the Rev. Mr. Stern and the Vicar of St. John's, Bootle? Wherein should I, or should any of us, in a secular point of view, be benefitted by the conversion of Sir Moses Montefiore? If I convert a Choctaw or a Maori, I have an appreciable advantage, because the former would then allow me the personal privilege of wearing my own scalp, and the latter would not put me aside for his morrow's breakfast. Besides, the Choctaw and the Maori are ridiculous idolators, or something akin to that. The Jew will not eat me, and he is not an idolater. He worships the Great Supreme, and he comes as near loving his neighbour as himself as the majority of Christians do. Why, then, should I convert him after the public and declamatory fashion of the Manchester Town Hall? I should have thought that, if so minded, we might have gone about the conversion of the Jews very much as we go about any other differences of opinion in religion amongst ourselves, and have discussed with the Jews privately, or generally, their alleged errors, instead of troubling that costly convert, the Rev. Mr. Stern, to orate about them publicly. I think I must subscribe a guinea or two, and send the Town Hall platform *en masse* to Owens College, and let Professor Theodores put on the gloves with them for half an hour. If they return with one argumentative limb unfractured, or one tooth gracefully reclining against another, I will throw in my lot with George Robinson, Esquire.

I don't think very much of the want of truth displayed in the manifestoes of this society. This may be more apparent than real, because all proselytizers exaggerate their gains, and they are certain to meet with loathsome creatures who make a gain of their religion. In the spring of this year, at a meeting held at Chichester, the Rev. Mr. Wainwright, of Blackpool, who is quite a sea-side divine unfurnished, stated that there were 2,000 baptized Jews in London, and 100 ordained clergymen who had been gathered from the Jewish race. He was challenged by Mr. Emmanuel, of Southsea, to afford some clue either by date or otherwise, of the baptism of these 2,000 converts. No one will be surprized that he did not do it, and the reverend gentleman has gone on complacently consuming potted shrimps at Blackpool since, without any idea that at Chichester he made a spectacle of himself, or that there was anything outrageous in the statement that "the Jews were as much in need of conversion as the Heathen." The Rev. Mr. Wainwright has been born behind his time. He ought to have been chaplain to King John, who drew the teeth of the Jews in order to get money out of them; or he might have combined the two offices, dentist and chaplain too, and have hung the salvation of a tooth on the salvation of a soul.

My dear *Sphinx*, all this is very melancholy. Though there is nothing at this moment in the expression of your countenance to indicate that you agree with me, I think you must do so. When I tell you that I know these Jews as traders and as friends; that if I want a half-sovereign for a poor man I know where I can get one without any questions asked "what church or chapel does he go to?" and that the Hebrew giver would no more think of getting on to a platform and denouncing Christianity than he would of proposing the initiatory rite of his religion to the Dean and Chapter of Manchester—I am sure you will think that there was a want of good taste, good sense, and good feeling in the recent Town Hall exhibition, of which, in any other relation of life, George Robinson, Esquire, would never have been guilty. As to the clergy who were present, I give them up as a bad job.—I am, your humble servant,

T.

A PHILOSOPHER'S AUTOGRAPH.—The editor of an American newspaper, having written to Carlyle for his autograph, got this answer:—"Here is my autograph. Much good may it do you.—T. CARLYLE, Chelsea, 23rd June, 1869."

THACKERAY AND TUPPER.—"Sir," said somebody in New York to Mr. Thackeray, "what do you think in England of Mr. Tupper?" "Sir," responded the great novelist, "in England, we don't think of Mr. Tupper at all."

CLASSIFICATION FOR DRAMATIC *Autho-dapters.*—Tom *Dove*-Taylors.

A DAY AT THE COUNTY COURT.

THERE seems to be much in common between the Sphinx, our great original, and the Law. Their origin is lost in the mist of past ages, and their existence is a puzzle to most of the human race. Speculating thus one evening a few weeks since in our front parlour, dignified by the title of "drawing-room," we heard the sounds of a brief colloquy at the front door, and presently were told that a gentleman wanted to see us. "Show the gentleman in," and thereupon he, the nameless one—in appearance something between a cabman and a life-insurance agent, with a slight flavour of tax-collector also—stepped briskly into the room. Instead of explaining to us the reason of his call, he promptly took his own side of the question, and, either from our not coming up to his expectations, or on the chance of our being somebody other than the person to be expected in that room, enquired in a slightly depreciatory tone, "Are *you* Mr. Anthony Nokes?" Slightly nettled at this question, we answered, "Yes; who are you?" There, thought we, this replaces the matter on its original footing. Now we shall have him. And in truth we had, and something more, for he jauntily replied, "Oh, I'm from the County Court. I've got a summons for you. Let me see," he continued, turning the corners of what looked like a bundle of tracts, "Brown, Jones, Robinson, Nokes, yes, here you are, sir. Suit of John Styles." "But we never had a suit from John Styles," said we. "Ha, ha, ha! very good, sir, very good indeed! I'd send that to *Punch* if it was me, sir. I would, I would indeed." "What on earth do you mean. This is no laughing matter," we remarked with some asperity; "this is a matter of business." "Quite so, sir, quite so, and I'd recommend you to attend to it, and good night, sir!" said the man, and, casting an airy glance round the apartment, as if making a mental and momentary appraisement of the value of its contents, he withdrew, leaving us slightly discomfitted, and yet unable to see where we had missed keeping our superior position.

The paper, we thought, though not exactly one to lie on every gentleman's table, will perhaps repay perusal. Bearing a large inked seal on its left hand margin, and a number of some thousands on the right, it presented a curious appearance of antiquity and modernity, so to speak. It is called a summons to appear to a plaint. The place to appeal at was the County Court, "holden" at Manchester, printed in old English too, like the creed in a newly-built church. Ah, here it is, John Styles. Firkin-street, commission agent, and name, street, and profession (by the way is it a trade or a profession to be a commission agent), each on a a different line, and all bracketed together to form "Plaintiff." Then followed our own name, address, and our occupation, again bracketed together to result in "Defendant." We gathered from the remainder that we were to appear at *a* court to be "holden" at the Court House, Nicholas Croft, High Street, in Manchester; yes—"aforesaid." Now there is a smatch of law about it that convinces us of its genuineness. We had become rather untrustful about it, fearing that after all it would end in a puff of a Circus Clown, or an advice to deal with Geighley, the model hat-man, or some similar catch. The day of the month, some six weeks off, at two o'clock was the time when we were to answer the plaintiff. The amount of the sum claimed and the costs of plaint were placed in figures opposite, and there was a sort of invoice or bill fastened to it, making it appear that we still owed John Stytes that ——, but we will not anticipate. Suffice it to say, that on the day named we appeared at the court.

At the end of High Street, a street devoted to various branches of the wholesale home trade, is a large concern, established in 1846, to supply the public with law by retail at their own homes. The building has a narrow frontage to that irregularly-planned continuation of High Street called Nicholas Croft, and is conspicuous for an iron gate by way of door to what would be an entrance, only it is never entered. The establishment is in a perpetual state of Chevy-Slyme-hood; it is all and always "round the corner." A steep staircase of stone led us into the Court. At the end opposite to the public entrance there is a kind of recess or chancel, with a raised floor partitioned off, and a chair and desk in the middle for the Judge, and to his left hand another chair for the high bailiff; but, as the high bailiff balances the large book he uses on the edge of the partition, there is evidently no occasion to have a desk for him. In front of the platform is a large table, at which there is a bench for attorneys, who would, if they could get there, sit facing the Judge, if he is there, and the Registrar, whether he is there or not! Mr. Samuel Kay, now the Registrar, formerly yclept the Clerk of the County Court has his chair immediately under the Judge's desk, and is the supreme and abiding authority of the establishment. He has been such since first, many years ago, we visited the Court.

So was he when I was a boy,
So is he now I am a man,
So will he be when I am old.

And, although known as a fact to employ some of his time either at his Westmoreland retreat or in collecting, or should we say receiving, that curious kind of income called in the advertisements "Baronet rents," yet he is at every sitting of the Court

sedet,
æternúmque sedebit,

attentive, no doubt, and diligent, but withal bearing himself in such a grim and gruff style as to display to their fullest extent all the—well, unamiable—parts of his disposition. No doubt the post is one not likely to afford much opportunity for the cultivation of good temper and kindly speech, except, perhaps, to a great mind; and if the suitors and witnesses can overlook a certain brusquerie and inclination to sarcastic comment, they may rest assured of fair dealing and perfect honesty, *without* politeness. The next official we noticed was a gentleman sitting at a desk at the (ecclesiastical) north end of the table we have spoken of. He also keeps a set of books, although, like the Prometheus, unbound; receives fees, answers questions, keeps the Court in order, and generally does everything that his superiors do not do, with tact, civility, consideration, and what used to be called good-breeding. We were unable to discover the precise office this gentleman, Mr. Keeling, holds, but he seemed to act under the direction of the Registrar, and is assisted by his son, or nephew, who assiduously copies the style of his immediate superior; so that the government may be said to be a despotism tempered by Keelings.

On enquiry, we found that the list of causes for the day comprised nearly 300, and that our cause was well in the second hundred, so we made up our minds to wait patiently. The cases were called on by the High Bailiff, but no Judge was visible, and some difficulty arose in getting a match, that is—a plaintiff to suit a defendant; but presently a pair were found, and the defendant having been duly snubbed by the Registrar was next asked, "Do you owe the plaintiff, John Smith, 13s.?" "Yes, sir," was the answer. "How can you pay it?" The poor defendant says, innocently and perhaps truly, "I don't know sir." Turning to the plaintiff suddenly the Registrar enquired of him what the defendant does. The unfortunate plaintiff jumps at the reason for the enquiry, and answers "He can pay 5s. a month, sir." For which exercise of intellect the Registrar glares at him for about a quarter of a minute and then says, "I don't ask you what he can pay; I ask you what he does!" "Well, sir, when he got these goods his wife ——" "Two shillings a month," jerks out the Registrar, and enters the decision in his book. Mr. Keeling does the same, and while the attendants are bustling away the plaintiff and defendant, each utterly ignorant of the decision, our old acquaintance at the back is shouting out the next names on his list. Next follow two or three blanks, neither side appearing, and these cases, as also those where the defendant appears and the plaintiff does not, are struck out, and the maxims for the plaintiff to study are, "Les absens out toujours tort," and "no money returned!" At the end perhaps of a general shopkeeper's list of some half dozen cases, mostly either paid or settled upon terms agreed on, comes, on the defendants' side, an elderly woman in an old plaid shawl and a bonnet of rusty black. She has an intelligent face, showing signs, like her apparel, of having been better once. "Are you Jane Thomas?" asks the Registrar. "No, I appear for her." "What are you, then," he asks. She's my married daughter," complacently rejoins the old lady. "Do you, or does your daughter, owe Peter Perkins two pounds five shillings?" "Well, no sir," says the defendant, as if the "no" had been rather difficult to get out. The Registrar's slight glance of commiseration cast over her, disposes us to feel more leniently towards him than we did some minutes back. He interrogates the provision dealer about the claim, and having got another denial from the defendant, he tells both parties to stand down. The process of standing down may not be generally understood. It seems to consist in the parties leaving the respective places they have occupied as the sheep and goat of the Registrar, and wandering aimlessly about the court-room until forcibly made to sit down on any bench near. It means, in reality, that where the claim is disputed or denied by the defendant, the Registrar, who has only power to settle undisputed claims, or cases in which no defence is attempted, refers the parties to the Judge, who will hear both sides, and decide as he thinks right.

Our turn came at last, and we saw our hitherto unseen foe emerge from a crowd and make his way to the plaintiff's place of trial, and we therefore placed ourself in a corresponding position opposite. Having

denied our liability with due formality, we were told to go before the Judge. We had learned in the course of the morning that the Judge was holding his court somewhere downstairs, and accordingly we ventured on the perils of the stairs once more. And here let us pause to recommend this staircase to the consideration of the architects who may be engaged on any of the public edifices now erecting. It seems to combine all the *desagremens* of a flight of steps with the dangers of an Alpine precipice. Threading the mazes of the ground floor of the building, we found that the Judge was trying a case in a lumber room at the back, partially cleared of its usual contents and filled with people, waiting and watching. Another small crowd waited at the doorway, which was jealously guarded by two police-officers. Behold us, then, at the very fountain of justice itself, thought we. Here is the court "holden" (shade of lost præterites) and the *penetralia* of the "Court-house" itself. Making the acquaintance of a friendly-disposed young man, who, to our fright, turned out to be a kind of supernumerary bailiff, we learned that this was the new judge, Mr. Russell. Mr. Ovens, the late Judge, was possessed of many excellent qualities. Of his deficiencies we wish to say nothing. For the office of a judge we think Mr. Russell better qualified, both by a longer, hard-working experience at the bar, greater patience and trouble-taking in examining into the facts and merits of a case, and by a total absence of any attempt at brilliancy. Mr. Russell appears to us to be endowed with that rare gift, the judicial mind. His decisions sometimes seemed to be slightly swayed by the law of the case, which he drew forth very clearly from the stores accumulated in his old working junior days, somewhat to the surprise of the lawyers contending before him, and unknown there at least since the Brandt age.

In course of time the perfidious plaintiff and we met in hostile array. The public would feel no interest in the details of the case, so we may merely say that the Judge took the same view of the case we had taken, and that the plaintiff was hideously routed. Before leaving, however, he was caught in the toils, and had to pay "hearing fees" to Mr. Keeling, to which we added, mentally—Hear! Hear!

THE REV. G. W. CONDER.

[CHEETHAM HILL CONGREGATIONAL CHAPEL.]

THE late Arthur Clough used to tell a story concerning a certain pastor of an American church who became a convert to Unitarianism. His congregation, unwilling to lose his services, and holding him in high esteem, on learning this result of his theological investigations, instead of dismissing him from his pastorate decided that, as things had taken this course, it would be most convenient to adapt themselves to the altered circumstances, and turn Unitarian also, which they accordingly did in the most accommodating spirit. Something of this kind has recently occurred at the Congregational Chapel, Cheetham Hill, where, as we announced in our columns at the time, the Rev. G. W. Conder has succeeded in persuading his flock to abandon the old form of Puritan worship, and adopt a Liturgical service based upon that of the Church of England. In the sermon *On Intelligent and True Worship*, with which he inaugurated the new service, he tells us that the change was sanctioned by the church and congregation, "with a great deal of unanimity." That this is a bold step, those will readily admit who are acquainted with the working of congregational churches. Some years ago we were present at a meeting of one of the largest and most influential congregational churches in the city, called for the purpose of considering whether it was desirable to use chants and anthems in the service. The discussion, an animated one, resulted in the conclusion that such innovations were dangerous, and to admit them would be like "getting in the thin end of the wedge." Chants and anthems were discarded, and to this day the service of song in that chapel is of the most puerile and feeble kind.

We were curious to see and hear the man who was daring enough to "cut prejudice against the grain," and accordingly repaired the other Sunday morning to the chapel in which Mr. Conder preaches. It is a Gothic building of modest dimensions, and outwardly of no particular character. It stands a little back from the road, with asphalt walks leading up to it, and a pleasant crescent of grass before it. Behind, it straggles downwards to lower ground where, beneath the chapel, is a schoolroom. Entering the chapel, we were pleasantly surprised by effects of height, lightness, and beauty, which the outside did not appear to warrant. It was built sixteen years ago, but has been altered from the original plan. It is cruciform, having an apse, or chancel, and transept. Considerable care and taste have been bestowed upon the arrangements and ornamentation, and, in these things, there is to the reflective mind much that is suggestive of the process by which the present form of service has been arrived at. If we mistake not, it is possible to trace much of the influence of Mr. Conder's mind in the details of the place. The light comes softened through stained windows, arranged in geometrical forms, with here and there a legend upon them. These would have had saints and prophets emblazoned on their panes had not some of the congregation objected thereto. As it is, symbolism is permitted to an extent which would be horrifying to the grave old Puritans, who regard such things as idolatry. Interlaced triangles, lambs, doves, and other objective forms of spiritual ideas flame out in gold and colour about what, for convenience of expression, we will call the chancel. Here, too, is the organ, with quaintly-patterned pipes, and stalls bedecked with blue and gold for the choir. A mighty eagle with outstretched wings forms a reading desk, and the pulpit is adorned with a brass lectern. Altogether the furniture is more suggestive of an Anglican church than of a dissenting chapel.

In the pew into which we were courteously conducted we found a copy of the new Liturgy. It is a good specimen of printing, and has evidently had much care bestowed upon it. Those who have had the framing of it have explained in the preface the principles upon which they have proceeded. It is needless for us to enlarge upon the peculiarities of the book. Suffice it to say that the Liturgy of the Church of England has been made the basis of this one, but has been treated very freely indeed. Omissions and additions have been made, altering frequently both the letter and the spirit of the old form. The Litany is transferred to the evening service, and the absolution left out. Provision is made for extempore prayers, and these have the merit of brevity. The whole service is conducted by the Rev. Mr. Conder, and the congregation enter into it with apparent interest, following the reader audibly, when required. On the whole, the musical part of the service is fairly given, but there is scarcely power enough in the choir.

The Rev. G. W. Conder, who, in the change he has effected here, has endeavoured to lay some foundation for a church of the future, was born at Hitchen, in Hertfordshire, and was brought up to commercial pursuits. Leaving these for the ministry, he received his training at Highbury College, and laboured successively at High Wycombe, the Isle of Wight, and Leeds, receiving a call to Manchester in 1864, where he has since remained. Outwardly, he has the appearance of a man of considerable force of character, strong-willed, but possessing sound judgment. There is nothing of the ascetic about him. From the ruddy, good-natured face, with its thick growth of beard, and the portly form, which seems to be tightened in the black band that encircles the Geneva gown, you naturally look for a broad-minded man. This impression is confirmed in his sermons. His thought is vigorous, and conveyed in clear, incisive language. Now and again he displays a poetical vein, though never striving for effect merely, or sacrificing truth to beauty. He borrows his illustrations and similes from nature, disclosing a mind in which the perceptive and reflective qualities predominate. He aims at simplicity rather than profundity, striving earnestly to make clear all the processes of his argument. We heard him preach a good sermon on "the glorious liberty of the children of God," in which he now and then showed a disposition to drift to the verge of politics, a tendency to which we imagine he is somewhat prone. One aspect taken of his text was, that the children of God were children of the light; the light being the soul's sustenance, and the love of it the test of the regenerated nature. There was much in this teaching which, when taken in connection with the new liturgical movement, reminded us of what Mr. Matthew Arnold has said regarding Philistinism and the war which "the children of the light" (that is, the receivers of modern ideas) are waging against "the strong, dogged, unenlightened people," who are inaccessible to new ideas, and impatient of them. In the present conflict and convulsion of the churches, Mr. Conder sees, with other broad-minded men, the possibility of a united Protestant Church. The service of such church, he thinks, should be founded on intelligent forms. Art is not to be regarded as idolatrous, but is to have its place within limits, being used to express spiritual ideas, and not for sensuous or æsthetical enjoyment, or for pride's sake, but ennobled and made sacred by a spirit of self-sacrifice. You cannot, says Mr. Conder, get rid of form in the act of worship; it therefore becomes merely a question of degree. Uttering a strong protest against formalism, he asks for an intelligent outward expression of religious thought and feeling.

In this altered aspect of Nonconformist worship there is a correspondence to the revival of church architecture, especially in the gothic form. The craving for religious art is spreading, and as dissenters have gone to the old cathedrals and their builders in search of ideas to be expressed in the building of their places of worship, so men like Mr. Conder are going to those old fathers, the master builders, who reared the beautiful fabric of the Liturgy of the English Church. Changes of this kind cannot be brought about without provoking opposition. Mr. Conder expresses himself prepared for this; he already anticipates the stupid cry of Ritualism. In religious bodies, as in other forms of society, there are always to be found Philistines, those "who have become, in a certain sense, of all people the most inaccessible to ideas, and the most impatient of them; inaccessible to them because of their want of familiarity with them; and impatient of them because they have got on so well without them, that they despise those who, not having got on so well as themselves, still make a fuss for what they themselves have done without." Against this Goliath of congregationalists he goes forth to war. We offer no opinion on the virtue or value of the change in a religious sense, regarding it as altogether an intellectual matter, for to us it seems obvious that forms of worship must change with intellectual advancement.

> The old order changeth, giving place to new;
> And God fulfils himself in many ways.

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ON THE TRAMWAY.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SPHINX.

SIR,—A few observations in your amusing dramatic sketch of last week appear to me to be only partially borne out by facts. In New York, the system of tramways strike the "entire stranger" with wonder, and subsequently with admiration. The wheels are cast metal, hooped with wrought rims and flanged. The cars hold from 30 to 50 inside, only: no provision is made on the roof for passengers. They are mostly made alike at both ends, in order that no loop line or turntable may be required—that is, at each end of the car is a platform about a foot from the ground, and three feet long, as wide as the car itself and railed across, but not railed at the sides, so that most passengers, by means of a projecting step like the platform of our railway carriages, may both step on and alight with ease whilst the cars are in motion. On the front platform stands the driver. Guards or conductors are entirely dispensed with. Our American cousins do not seem to see why they should invest their capital for the purpose of allowing guards to reap a large share of the profits, and then have to pay them wages for it. They manage it better and in a simpler way. On entering, you place the fare in the slot of a strong iron locked box. The driver sees that you put it there, and if you have to obtain change he can give it to you, a sufficient amount being supplied to him which he is obviously accountable for. This box is opened by the cashier, in the presence of some other official, and the amount entered to the credit of that particular car. Thus each car only costs one man's wages and cannot be robbed. The tramways consist of rails, the heads of which are level with the street itself, and the flanges of the wheels run in a wide groove below the street. There is only one tramroad always running up the centre of the street. There are no crossings. The points are very simple, and there are no sidings except at the depôt or stand from which the cars start. Each route is complete in itself, and the cars never return by the way they go to any part of the city.

In New York itself, the cars proceed in succession right up the centre of the Broadway. First comes "first avenue car," next "second avenue car;" and so on, up to "sixteenth avenue." As soon as a car arrives at the avenue corresponding with the number painted upon it, it leaves the Broadway tram by means of a sweeping curve, the points of which are constructed so that the coachman can, by turning his horses easily, leave the straight track and get on to the curve. This is done merely by points without switches, that is, there is no moveable switch, which would be unnecessary, as the cars only travel one way. The cars proceed along these avenues a certain distance, and then return to the ferries by another line of streets parallel to Broadway. This system is so arranged, that not more than two sets of cars return by the same parallel lines of streets. So that to the east of Broadway the return journeys of the several avenue circuits are all different though parallel, and thus a large district is completely served. If you want to leave the city you make towards Broadway; if you wish to get to the city you make for any avenue, or any cross streets. Cars are perpetually running during the day from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m.; at night, every ten minutes from 8 p.m. to midnight; every 15 minutes from 12 p.m. till 3 a.m., and every 30 minutes from 3 a.m. till 6 a.m. For late pedestrians returning from parties or "going for the doctor," the cars are really a more valuable safeguard against robbery than the police themselves. The fare is usually three cents, irrespective of distance, and is not increased at night.

To apply the remarks of your article to this system is, I think, wrong, for with such a system here, half the time occupied in our present omnibuses would be saved, and as two horses and one man could do the work now performed by three horses and two men, and

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no loss from theft could occur, at least one third of the fares could be remitted to the public, whilst a better dividend would result to the shareholders. Suppose Albert Square was the starting point. Oxford Road returning to town by way of Dickinson Road and Longsight; Stretford Road returning by City Road, Lower Mosley Street, and Mount Street; Greenheys returning by Emden Street, Burlington Street, Dover Street, and Brook Street; Hyde Road returning by Stockport Road; Cheetham Hill returning by Waterloo Road and Strangeways; Higher and Lower Broughton, by Greengate, Broughton Road (by the proposed new route through Salford when completed), up to Kersal Moor, and back by Bury New Road and Strangeways; Chester Road, Cross Lane, and back by Chapel Street, Salford; and many other similar routes will illustrate the application to our own city.

Flange wheels made of iron last for years: the life of an omnibus wheel is, I believe, about three or four weeks, and requires that the tires should be renewed at least twice in that period. Had your "No 1 Passenger" known this, his cough might not have been so bad. Again, the constant leaving of the trams on the Pendleton route must wear both tram and wheels, whilst another point in favour of the New York flange tramway is, that no other vehicle can take advantage of it, as I have noticed is too often the case on the Pendleton route, to the obstruction of the traffic and destruction of the metals. The flange tramway is by far the most mechanical. It is simpler and more durable and permanent. The guide-wheel tramway, as laid down in Salford, I have always looked upon as a compromise, a concession, in fact, to the whims and prejudices of the ignorant opposers who condemn *all* innovation.—I am, sir, yours, &c.,

JAY DOUBLEYOU AITCH.

PLAYGOERS AND PLAYGOING.

IN France playgoing is a recreation, in Germany it is a habit; in Italy, among the upper classes, it seems to be a social necessity. The theatres are at once the clubs and the drawing-rooms of Italy. In all the chief cities of the peninsula, but more especially at Naples and Milan, people pay their visits, transact their business, and make their appointments at the theatre. Italians, as a rule, do not receive much at their homes. It is only at Florence and Genoa that the English customs of dinner-giving and party-giving prevail to any extent. Speaking generally, the life which an Italian leads within doors is untidy and uncomfortable. He has no notion of entertaining visitors, looks upon his house as a shelter against wind and rain, dresses in it, sleeps in it, but goes for his enjoyment elsewhere. At Milan, for instance, every man who has 15*l.* a year to spare takes a stall at the Scala, and goes there with unvarying regularity every evening. The ladies have boxes which they furnish as they please, some boxes sporting blue curtains, others red, others yellow, which gives the theatre a gay but somewhat tawdry appearance. If a lady boasts many friends, her box is filled with visitors from the beginning of the performance to the end. Between the acts her liveried footman, or footmen, hand round ices, fruit, and coffee; and at the fall of the curtain she and her guests, ten or a dozen in number, will often sup in the small boudoir which is attached to the box. This is a pleasant way of enjoying the theatre, but for married men whose wives have boxes it is a very expensive one. No wonder that after paying the ice bill, the coffee bill, the supper bill, the upholsterer's bill, and the milliner's bill, which the possession of a box entails, an Italian husband has small appetite for dinner-giving. The San Carlo at Naples, which the Neapolitans call the theatre of the world, was celebrated until recently for its "bench of critics," the terror of singers. These critics were about twenty in number. They were mostly noblemen and journalists having a thorough knowledge of and a refined taste for music. They occupied the entire first row of orchestra stalls, and exercised an influence over the performers which is best defined in the words of Malibran, who said that she was obliged to drink champagne before venturing to face them. It was after being hissed by the "bench of critics" at the San Carlo that Nourrit, the famous French tenor, committed suicide.

MR. CARLYLE'S ADVICE TO AN AUTHOR.

MR. Carlyle, in acknowledging receipt of a copy of a pamphlet, *The Temple of Isis*, offers some advice to the author, which has been published in an American paper. He writes:—

"My constant regret was, and is, to see such powers operating in a field palpably chaotic, and lying beyond the limits of man's intelligence. These are not thoughts which you give; they are huge, gaunt, vacant dreams, for ever incapable, by nature, of being either affirmed or denied. My clear advice, therefore, would be—give up all that; refuse to employ your intellect on things where no intellect can avail; to sow good seed on realms of mere cloud and shadow. The highest intellect which issues in no certainty has completely failed. The world of practice and fact is the true arena for its inhabitants; wide enough for any or for all intellects of men; and never lay more encumbered with sordid darkness and pernicious delusions than even now. Real intellect might write with advantage on such things, better still, perhaps, it might remain silent, and bend its whole force on illuminating one's own poor path in such a wilderness; on more and more clearly ascertaining, for at least one earnest man, what to do, and how to do it. Probably you will not adopt this advice, almost certainly not at once; nor shall that disaffect me at all. Your tract I found throughout to be rather pleasant reading; and to have a certain interest; nothing in it, except one small section, treating of a thing I never mention, unless when compelled—the thing which calls itself 'Spiritualism' (which might more fitly be called 'Ultrabrutalism,' and 'Liturgy of dead sea apes')—was disagreeable to me."

A Frenchman has translated Shakspere's line, "Out, brief candle," into French thus, "Get out, you short candle."

AT THE PLAY.—A pit wit amused the house the other evening during the performance of a piece at the Porte St. Martin by settling the pomposity of a small actor who was to announce the arrival of the king in these words:—"Gentlemen, I announce the king." "Very well," said the pittite, taking him up *écarté* fashion; "if you have the king mark him, don't make such a fuss."

TO READERS AND CORRESPONDENTS.

ERRATUM.—In the article on Tennyson last week, the last line of the verse on page 247, should, of course, read:—

The mighty hopes that *make* us men.

DESERTED CHURCHES.—We are not sorry to see that our description of the disgraceful state of St. Mary's Church has attracted so much attention, that a Writer to the Papers has thought it necessary to signify his approval of our remarks. In common honesty or fairness, however, it would have been more to the credit of "A Citizen" if he had acknowledged the source of his information. It would, also, have done more credit to his discernment and his knowledge of the meaning of words, if he had characterized the *Sphinx* by some less inappropriate adjective than that of "facetious." Literary, critical, humourous, descriptive, satirical—any of these words would have accurately described one phase or other of the many-sided character of the *Sphinx*, which is not, and never has been a "comic paper" or a "facetious journal," in the sense in which those terms are usually employed,

LONDON PAPERS.—The second series of sketches appeared in the following numbers:—47, the *Athenæum*; 50, the *Spectator*; 52, *Bell's Life*; 54, the *Illustrated London News*; 55, the *Saturday Review*; and 57, the *Daily News*.

FRENCH.—The *French Mastery Manual*, by M. Alfred Coignou. The price, we believe, is about half-a-crown.

RECEIVED.—P. H. W.; H.; A Friend of the Proprietor.

Communications should be addressed to the Editor *Sphinx* Office, 37, Oxford Street, Manchester. Every manuscript should bear the name and address of the sender. All contributions are attentively considered, and unaccepted MSS. are returned on receipt of stamps for postage. No replies or MSS. can be delivered on personal application.

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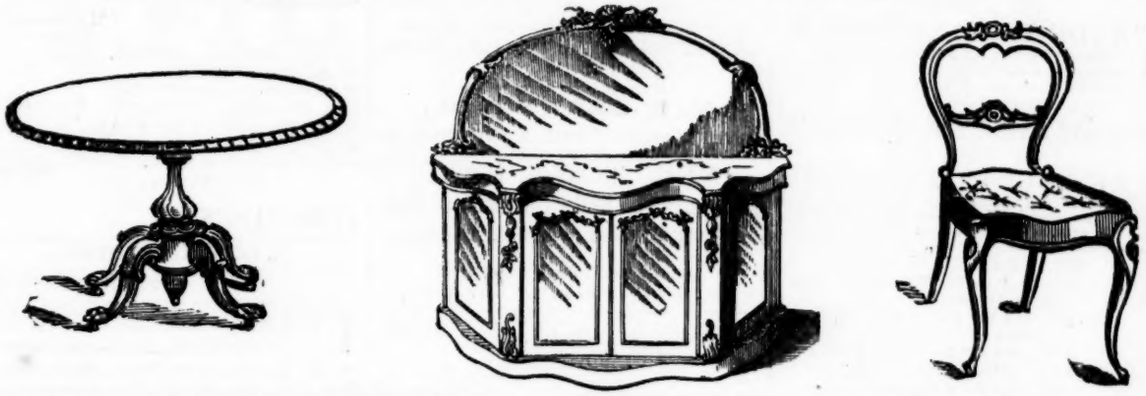

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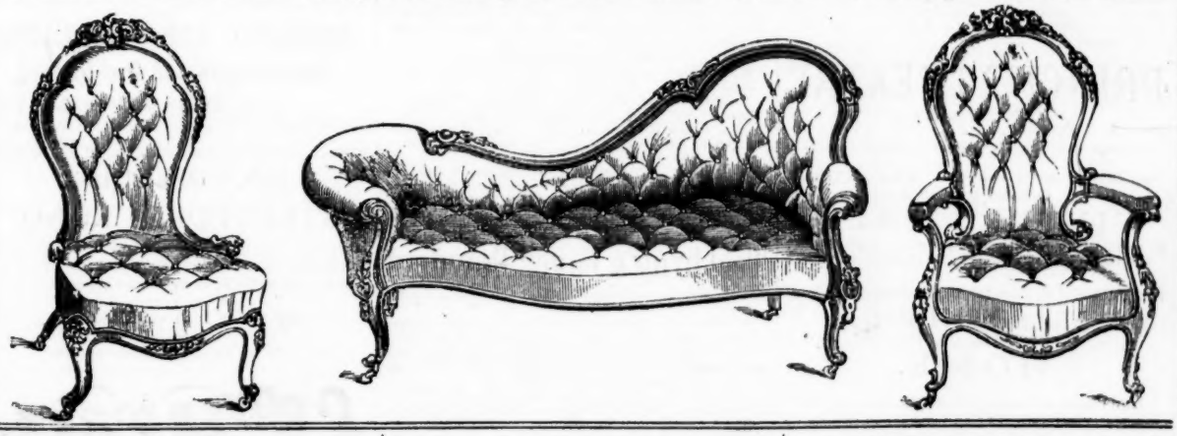

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